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## **Geopolitical and Ethnocultural Aspects of Russian Border Area Regional Security under the Circumstances of Socio-Cultural Transit of Eurasian Civilization**

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*The article focuses on geopolitical and ethnocultural aspects of Russian border area regional security under the circumstances of socio-cultural transit of Eurasian civilization. It also considers the issue of influence of Tengrism ideology on the processes of polithogenesis of the Turkic and Mongolian peoples and formation of statehood forms.*

*Keywords: religion, ideology, Tengrian religion, synergetics, process of self-organisation, self-regulation, Statehood, Empire of Hunnu, Hamag Mongol Uls.*

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Many places, mountains, rivers, and lakes of the Angara River territory are famous for their legendary history, forming an important stratum of the Buryats' national and mythopoetic heritage. These myths, legends and stories contain the names of totem ancestors of numerous Buryat clans and tribes. Some ethnonyms were derived from these names.

Totem-and-genealogical myths about Bukha-noion-baabai, which are widely spread among the Buryats of the Angara River territory and the neighbouring Tunka valley, mention the

origin of the "bulagat" tribal name. According to one of the variants of this myth, Bokho-Mui, a son of Western tengri Zaian Sagana, quarreled with Bokho-Teli, a son of Eastern tengri Khamkhir Bogdo, as both wished to be masters of blacksmith's work. Both came down to earth (the former turned into Bukha-noion, a dark grey bull, the latter – into marked Tarlan Eren bukh) and started running after each other around Lake Baikal. At last they met in Taidzhi-khan's estate and began butting each other, trampling down everything around. Taidzhi-khan's daughter sent

them away but got pregnant from Bukha-noion's gaze (or bellowing).

According to one version, she gave birth to one son, according to other ones, she gave birth to two sons. One of the sons was recognized by Bukha-noion as his own son whom he placed in an iron cradle on the mountain, fed and guarded. Two shaman sisters, Asakhyn and Khosykhyn, held a special *tailagan* (a shamanistic ritual with sacrificial offering) and got that boy whom they named "Bulagat found from under the bull". When Bulagat grew up, he would go to the bank of Lake Baikal. There he got acquainted with the boy living in the lakeside chap. The boy's name was "Ekhirit, the son of a marked burbot father and a lakeside chap mother". It was Asakhyn who also managed to get him thanks to her cunning. Bulagat and Ekhirit became the ancestors of the Bulagats and the Ekhirits.

Heroic-and-epic stories, *uligers* (ul'ger), were main and most popular in the system of genres of the Buryat poetic arts. Abai Gesar heroic epos is the most widely known and famous. It glorifies this strong epical hero's deeds in his fight with *mangadkhais*, cruel *mangyses*, many-headed, many-horned monsters. This explains why numerous names of the Angara River territory's places, mountains, passes, lakes and rivers (including the environs of Ulei village) were connected in the Burayts' consciousness with a mythopoetic reflection of Abai Gesar's heroic deeds in the name of good and justice, in defense of the orphaned and the oppressed.

Thus, for example, there is *Tariaatyn Taban Khushuun* mountain in *Ekhe-Ialga* place. It can be called "Tariaaty five-pointed mountain", that is "Five-pointed mountain rich in millet and wheat". The local residents explained that the word "tariaaty" nominates the place where they used to sow millet and wheat and the word "five-pointed" refers to the episode when Gesar had a fierce fight with a cruel *mangadkhai* monster, stumbled and

leaned his arm against this mountain's top where slight depressions, Abai Gesar's finger prints, appeared.

There were two sacred mountains, *Ulaan* and *Udagtai*, on the opposite side of the valley. The pass between them had a form of a saddle. The local residents explained that the cavity between the mountains is the place where Gesar's giant arrow split one mountain into two parts. They mentioned that the pass is the way for them to go to *Bil'chir* and farther to *Bokhan*. These words make one think that the whole territory is filled with Gesar's heroic spirit. Gesar seemed to have honoured it with his heroic deeds and thus the territory became the place of a special cult, a *tengrian* cult, for our ancestors. A *tengrian* cult is the basic element of *Tengrism*, the religion based on the adoration of the "Eternal Blue *Tengeri Sky*" the main deity of all the Mongolian peoples.

In the works by many scholars (D.S. Dugarov, S.Sh. Chagdurov, T.M. Mikhailov, D.A. Burchina, et al.) it is mentioned that the Buryat heroic epos (and primarily the epos about Gesar hero) that united many peoples of Central and Inner Asia (the Tibetans, the Tanguts, the Mongols, the Tuvinians, etc.) became the main source of the *tengrian* religion, a special religious-and-philosophic and ethic doctrine of *Tengrism*. Under "the source" we mean not only a written primary source, that is a set of sacred texts and canonical works (as, for example, the Bible, the Koran, the Buddhist sutras and treatise, Laozi's and Zhuangzi's works) in which the doctrine's philosophy is presented in written form, but mainly a specific epic form of folklore peculiar to *Tengrism*.

Such a form of summarizing the religious ideas is fully in line with a folk character and spirit of this religion as well as its specific mythopoetic form that contains and adequately transfers a powerful energy of the "Heavenly" religion to the listeners. Like Gesar epos, this religion originated

not from some Great Teacher's teaching. It is the creation of the people themselves who expressed their hopes for higher justice and happier life, thoughts about the universe and universal spiritual force of the Heavenly God Tengri.

In other words, Gesar epos is both the Bible and the Koran of this purely folk religion that is closely connected with people's everyday life and surrounding landscape with sacred mountains and springs, rivers and lakes as its key elements. That's why Tariaaty, Ulaan, Udagtai mountains as well as other objects of the tengrian cult are mentioned in the works by T.M. Mikhailov, S.P. Baldaev, D.S. Dugarov, M.N. Khangalov and other outstanding Buryat scholars who pointed out that many sacred mountains of the Buryats, dwelling on the Angara River territory, are connected with the periods of Turkic and Uigur khaganates which were prior to the Mongolian epoch. They were especially closely connected with the Kurykans, ancestors of the Sakha-Uraankhai people (the Yakuts), and the Uigur-Uriankh people of Trans Sayan territory.

As for the name of Udagtai mountain, it is obviously connected with the Turkic-and-Uigur word "ydygtyg" ("sacred"). This word functions in the language of the descendants of the ancient Teleuigurs from Sayano-Altai, including the Uigur-Uriankhs from the eastern Sayan Mountains (the Tuvinians, the Soiois, the Khakass people, the Tofalars). At the same time the Buryat and Mongolian "ulaan" is undoubtedly connected with the name of 'Chishan', a sacred mountain of a protomongolian tribe ukhuan'. This name also means "red" (cf. Chesan mountain in Kizhinginsk aimak in Buryatia). At the foot of Ulaan mountain local Buryats from Ekhe-Ialga village, belonging to bulagat tribes onkhotoi, ongoi and khogoi which descended from three brothers (Onkhotoi, Ongoi and Khogoi correspondingly), Bulagat's descendants, who came here from Baitog mountain environs (the meaning of Turkic-and-Uigur "Bai-

tag" is a sacred mountain), held tailagan, the main public tengrian prayer. This prayer is also connected with the cult of mountains and tengris, kind "western" heavenly deities, who were led by Gesar, a son of Khormust-tengri, a supreme deity of sun for Siberian Scytho-Aryans (Tuvinian "Korbustu", Altaic "Korbustan", Old Aryan "Akhura-Mazda", a later variant of "Khormazd" from which the name of "the People of Khor" meaning "the People of the Sun", "the God of the Sun's Children", was derived).

Tailagan was a real great festive occasion for the whole tribe at which they danced, shot arrows, arranged wrestling fights, horse races, etc. In connection with Sayano-Altai, Tele-Uigur, Turkic and Scytho-Siberian ("Iranian-speaking") toponyms and ethnonyms of the Buryat Mongols, bearing a relation to tengrian ceremonial rites, the root base "tai" should be paid attention to. It is obviously present in the word "tailagan" and means the ritual of the adoration of the Heaven ("Taiy") on a sacred mountain as well as the mountain itself ("tau", "taiga").

On the other side of Ulaan and Udagtai sacred mountains, in the farthest, "upper" part of the Ulei valley there is a pointed cone-shaped hillock, Orgoli, that appeared from the ground Gesar shook off from his arrowhead. The evidence of a mythological basis of these toponyms is found in "Buriaty" ("The Buryats"), a fundamental collaborative work from "Peoples and Cultures" series (Moscow, Nauka, 2004) edited by L.L. Abaeva, Doctor of History, and N.L. Zhukovskaia, Doctor of History. Dwelling upon the Buryat toponymic legends and stories, V.Sh. Gungarova and N.L. Zhukovskaia mention in their article "The Buryat myths, legends and stories": "Formation of rivers, lakes, mountain passes is connected with the name of Gesar, the main hero of Buryat epos. For example, Onshoo and Donshoo lakes appeared at the places where Gesar's horse made dints in the mountain ridge

when he rode along the watershed between the Ida and Osa rivers, pursuing Lobsogolda mangadkhais. Orgoli Mountain was formed when Gesar cleaned his arrow from the earth. All these objects are in Irkutsk oblast” (*Buriaty*, 2005, p. 266).

Along with the adoration of Gesar, the Buryats’ main cultural hero, Orgoli Mountain was also connected with the common Mongolian cult of sacred mountains, one of the main, universal and key tengrian cults, which embodied ancient cosmological, religious and mythological beliefs about Axis Mundi (Axis of the Universe), a sacral vertical line, piercing the whole universe and connecting the Father-Heaven with the Mother-Earth (Abaeva, 1992). The universal meaning of the cult of mountains in Mongolian Tengrism was caused by the fact that every sacred mountain, even the smallest mountain (or even a stone, a rock, a small pyramidal hill of stones which were called “obo” by the Mongols and the Trans-Baikal Buryats and “ova” by Turkic-speaking peoples of Trans-Sayan) symbolized a Universal Mountain as a vertical cosmic centre of the Universe, connecting all the three main and equally significant cosmic substances – Heaven, Earth, Man.

The sacral meaning of Orgoli Mountain and its environs was intensified by the presence of a sacred spring (bulag) at which “*zukheli*” tribal sacrificial offerings were held. During the ritual a sacrificial animal’s skin, head and legs were stuck on a long birch pole with its butt fixed in the ground. The head was decorated with many-coloured ribbons. The fir-tree’s bark was stuck into the teeth. The head faced the sunrise side which manifests the connection with an old Aryan adoration of the Sun still observed in Mongolian and Turkic Tengrism. Genghis Khan’s Mongols considered this ritual to be so important for the maintenance and strengthening of a genealogical line of his “golden”, that is “regal clan” (altyn

urag) that the kinsmen whose genealogy could be doubted were not accepted to the clan.

Like sacred mountains and springs, birch poles with sacrificial *zukheli* animals served peculiar markers of a sacral ethnic territory, visual means of sacralization of the Mother-Earth, the Buryats’ main shrine, closely connected with the adoration of Khukhe Munkhe Tengri (Eternal Blue Sky), his son, a “pure” sun deity Esege Malaan-Tengri, the wise Father-deity and Abai Gesar-Khubuun, a senior deity from the group of kind, “pure” western Tengrism, born by earthly parents as well as Genghis Khan.

The tengrian meaning can be found in *zukheli* ritual as it had to support the idea of a heavenly origin of “the golden clan” and its genealogical ties with the old regal (khan and khagan) clans of the Gunn-Khunnus, the Scythian Aryans (whose tribal name is *sakha*), the Tokhars, the Uigur-Uriankhs, the Turkic people of Ashin, and the Tugius, as well as such direct Mongolian ancestors as the Zhuzhans, the Ukhuans and the Sian’biits.

The heroic epos of all Mongolian-speaking “forest peoples” was directly connected with their tengrian religion and beliefs about a preternatural power (*zada*) of tengrian deities. This power is attributed to the epos itself as well as its executor (*dzhangarchy*). Thus, E.P. Bakaeva, a famous Kalmyk researcher, analyzing religious and mythological base of Dzhangar epos, mentions that Khormust-tengri could strike with “a thunder arrow”, and the White old man was responsible for rain and it was he who was asked for rain and generation development. Thus, Dzhangar could be regarded as a magic means to make it rain (Bakaeva, 1996). The author makes an important conclusion about a religious character of Dzhangar epos related to other kinds of heroic stories of the Mongolian and Turkic peoples (for example, Sakha-Yakut Olonkho): “The meaning of both “Dzhangar” name and a series of “zada”

type of stories of the same name in its initial understanding, according to S.E. Maslov, is “magic” (“white magic”). Such symbolism fully agrees with the meaning of “janr” – faith (“White faith” of the Sayan and Altai peoples, Ak janr, Ak Chaian, also called “burkhanism”). It is Dzhangar epos that is an esoteric heritage of the old faith preserved in the form of the heroic stories” (Ibid., p. 26).

It is especially important to emphasize that the Altai people’s and the Khakass people’s “White faith”, which is ethno-genetically connected with “the Aryan religion” (the word for word translation of the phrase is “white faith”) and is a more ancient variant of the latter in ethno-confessional regard, is also a more ancient variant of Mongolian Tengrism or, at least, its religious and philosophic, metaphysical basis. B.S. Dugarov in his report at the Congress of the researchers of the Mongols in Ulan-Bator in 2004 explained it by the “influence of Iran” that seems to be absolute nonsense (as Iran is far away from Sayano-Altai). Later on, under the influence of critical remarks he modified his point of view, having added “the influence” of Manichaeism and Buddhism (unfortunately, he doesn’t take into consideration that the Sayano-Altai people had their own religion – Ak Chaian, also known as “burkhanism”) (Dugarov, 2010). Without knowing about the existing name of this ethno-confessional tradition of the Sayano-Altai people, which adequately represents its main point and nature, D.S. Dugarov called it “the White shamanism” and thus integrated two religions, incompatible in their religious meaning and belonging to totally different ethnic populations (shamanism of the Tungus people and tengrian “White faith” of the Turkic and Mongolian people), in one name (Abaev, 2004).

According to this logic, Tibetan religion Bon should be also named “shamanism” in spite of the fact that there is no such a word in Tibetan ethno-

cultural tradition at all as the word “shaman” is peculiar to the Tungus and Manchurian pronunciation and in the Even language it means “ridden (by the spirit)”, “frantic”, “reckless”, etc. The Buryat and Mongolian term “boo” designates a priest of this variant of Turkic and Mongolian Tengrism (that is “a minister” of the tengrian cult) and originates in Turkic and Uigur *bek//beg//bal* that mean “a commander”, “a military leader”, “a strong man” (from “baga” + “tur”; cf. Slavic “buitur”) or, perhaps, in the Sakha-Urankhai “bogj”, connected, in its turn, with Uigur “bogo”//“boku” that means a three-headed dragon, the main soldierly deity of ancient esoteric unions of the Turkic and Mongolian people. The dragon’s name “Azhi-Dakhaka” is etymologically connected with the Universal dragon (Mongolian Abarga-Moge, Tuvian Amarga-Chylan). That is why the toponym “Bokhan” can’t be understood as “the capital of shaman people” as it is thought in folk etymology or in the interpretations of the scholars who ignore a tengrian character of the national state religion of the Uigur-Uriankhs and the Kurykans (Chinese *Guligan’* which became particularly apparent in the cult of the Heavenly Dragon, revered especially by the members of secret military unions that subdued the local Tungus people (Buryat and Mongolian khamnigans) in the period of Kurykan khaganate formation (VI century)).

It’s obvious that subdued khamnigans couldn’t dictate the Turkic-speaking Uigur-Uriankhs the name of their own ethno-confessional tradition (“shamanism”) though there was no continuity of ethno-cultural traditions among the Uigurs and the Mongols at all. The most important terms of ethno-confessional tradition and religious culture in whole are not the exceptions. As a result, due to the fact that the aboriginal population started speaking the Mongolian language many Turkic and Uigur terms penetrated into the language of the Buryat Mongols (starting from the XII

century). Thus, Scythian and Aryan Azhi-Dakhaka, who was at first a god of war in secret religious societies of the Turkic Uigurs, later became a Buryat soldierly deity Azhirai-Bukhe (the Yakut Azyren'), having naturally preserved his initial "asuric", that is angry, severe, fierce, soldierly nature of ancient Aryan and tengrian deities. This continuity also manifested itself in the following fact: when Genghis Khan became the Great Khan he was declared "a terrible deity of Khazhir". This emphasized his heavenly charisma and peculiar magic power once again. This Tengrian and Aryan title as well as the status of the Son of the Heaven focused on his special "heavenly" status and 'heavenly' origin as well as the origin of the clan from which Genghis Khan descended from although he, as well as Gesar, was born by earthly parents who had special magic ties with Eternal Blue Sky.

It is interesting to note that in the morning of the first day of Tsagaan Sar holiday the modern Uriankhs of Mongolian Altai say the following: "...irsheezh khairla, Monk Tenger Dobun min' // Monzhkhin Alun-Goo min' // Idee undaa zooglogtun // Tsoid khairkhan". The custom of the Altai Mongolian Uriankhs to "cry at the sky" during a thunderstorm is also the evidence of particularly close relationship ties of the Uriankhs with Khalkha-Mongolians (via Dobun-Mergana and Alan-Goa, their common ancestors) as well as of their particularly intimate relations with the Heaven itself (also via their half-mythical ancestors). This custom is also registered by Rashid ad-Din. In his "Chronicles" he dwells upon "the forest Uriankats" of Eastern Tuva, that is the Tuvian Todzhints.

A genealogical legend about Alan-Goa, the Mother-progenitress, served the same aim to provide evidence that all the Mongols (the Khamag Mongols), including the Buryats, had peculiar ties with the Eternal Blue Sky and its charismatic power (khushen, khusen) which

confers heavenly charisma on the members of this clan (bordzhigin). Many researchers consider a famous episode from "The Secret History of the Mongols" to be a reflection of real historic events of the mid of the IX century – the beginning of the X century. The episode is about the marriage of Dobun-mergen whose name is connected with the ethnonyms Toba and Toba-Wei dynasty, ruling in Northern China (the years of 386-538) and regarded to be a successor dynasty of Xianbei Empire. The name of Alan-Goa (the Tuvian Alan-Khoo, the Yakut Alan-Kuo) is also used in "shaman" (tengrian, to be more exact) cryings of our Osin and Bokhan Buryats published by T.M. Mikhailov under the title "Khukhe Munkhe Tengeri" (Ulan-Ude, 1996).

According to the Mongolian traditional genealogy, the genealogy of Genghis Khan's "golden clan" right up to his great grandfather Kabul Khan, the period of the transition to a patrilineal system of kinship, counted off from Alan-Goa, that is via a female branch of kinship. As for a male branch of kinship, it is of a purely mythical nature. It is fictitious per se as Bodonchar, Genghis Khan's ancestor, was born via immaculate conception from Alan-Goa's "pure loins" after the death of her lawful husband Dobun-Mergen (he is considered to be the Mongols' and the Uriankhais' forefather). Bodonchar was born from "the Yellow Dog", entering Alan-Goa's yurt in the form of a sun ray through a flue. Maalikh Baiaudaets, Alan-Goa's Uriankhai servant who later became her cohabitant, is considered his real father.

This story about Bodonchar ("Bodonshar Munkhag" according to L. Dashniam), included in "The Secret History of the Mongols", is believed to be quite dark and mysterious. Together with the mythologem of Alan-Goa and her "immaculate conception", explaining a genealogical conception of a "heavenly", that is divine origin of Bordzhigin, Genghis Khan's

“khan clan”, leaves its imprint of a religious “esoterism” on this sacral text. The title itself (“The Secret History of the Mongols”) helps to understand the essence of the esoteric mystery, some “secret” of Alan-Goa’s mythologem and of other mythopoetic images, closely interwoven with a real history (Bodonchar’s image in particular), to a greater extent.

In connection with this, L. Dashniam refers to “The Secret History of the Mongols” and writes: “...Bodonshar Monkhag was the youngest of the three brothers born by Alan-Goa after Dobun Mergen’s death. Alankhoo said: “...Every night, when the Moon shone a fair-haired man used to enter the yurt through the flue, he petted my womb and his light penetrated into it”; “these sons are hallmarked with a heavenly origin” (“The Secret History of the Mongols”, paragraph 21).

Bel’gunotai and Bugunotai, Dobun Mergen’s sons, commented this: “The only man in the house is Maalikh Baiaudaets. He has got three sons and this is what should be given by a man” (Ibid., paragraph 18). Referring to this, L. Dashniam mentions that “there is probably a necessity to specify whether Bodonshar is a human of a heavenly origin or a Baiaudaets’s son. At the same time a historically incontrovertible fact testifies that Bodonshar is a Bordzhigin generation’s forefather” (Dashniam, 2012, p. 3).

“The Secret History of the Mongols” runs that some Uriankhai met Dobun Mergen in the forest and gave him a deer’s meat. Later, on his way Dobun Mergen met a poor man who was accompanied by a little son. The man asked to share a part of the game with him and after he was given a half of a deer he gave a boy to Dobun Mergen. The latter took the boy with him. Since then the boy lived in Dobun Mergen’s house. The boy’s father introduced himself to Dobun Mergen as Malikhei Baivugai (refer to Prof. Dashniam’s article “Nekotorye dopolneniia k

istorii Bodonchara Monkhaga” [Some additions to Bodonchar Monkhag’s history]!).

In L. Dashniam’s point of view this is rather a “dark” history giving evidence of Bodonchar’s unusual origin. Moreover, the relatives of Bordzhigin clan’s historic forefather said that he was a kind of insane, doltish and stupid and that he always kept silent when a guest. According to L. Dashniam, it is what gives evidence of his “heavenly” origin, his selectness as a forefather of the “heavenly” clan of Genghis Khan who became a Great Son of the Heaven according to the tengrian tradition of selectness (Ibid.).

In his another article Prof. Dashniam focuses upon the Mongols’ ideas connected with a “divine origin of the adoration of the heaven” and writes: “Ascribing a heavenly origin to themselves, the Mongols define a human’s heavenly nature. Thus, the Mongols associate their fate with the Heaven-tenger. The brightest example of this is the definition of the concept “heavenly” containing the following idea: “We are the children of not only an earthly whirl of events but of a cosmic one as well...” (Dashniam, 2011, p. 148). Speaking about Sayano-Altai origin of the Mongolian Tengrism, academician Sh. Bira mentioned in 1986: “Undoubtedly, the adoration of the heaven ... was firstly peculiar among earlier representatives of the Altai peoples of Central Asia. Thus, the Khunnus, at least, who represented the western, Khunnu-Altai branch that was one of the main two branches the ancient community of the Altai peoples broke up into at the period between X and V centuries A.C. (as for the other branch, the Tungus and Manchurian tribes belonged to it), worshiped the Heaven and the Earth long before Christian Era. As for the Khunnus (or the Gunns), who turned out to be in Eastern Europe in the IV century already, kept on being faithful to their religion with its cult of the Heaven. It’s quite possible that, according to its origin, this cult of the ancient great Bulgarians

(the Tangras) is closer to an old Khunnu-Altai variant of the cult than to its later variants and to a Turkic one, in particular" (Bira, 2011, p. 6).

Dwelling upon the Mongolian theonyms which turned into ethnonyms and toponyms, it should be noted that "Alan-Goa-Bodonchar" mythologem sort of divided all the subsequent generations of the Mongols into the Niruns (from *nuruu*, meaning 'a ridge') born from Alan-Goa's pure, immaculate loins and called "ridge ones" due to the fact that they dwelt in mountain and taiga places (Sayano-Altai, Mongolian Altai, Gornaya (Mountain) Buryatia, that is the Eastern Sayan) and the Darlekens (from *darkhan*, meaning 'a blacksmith') mainly dwelling in the steppe zone. By all appearances the "ridge" Mongols were meant to be the ancestors of the Buryats from the Mangut clan including the Osinsk-Bokhan family clan of the Makhutovs. The clan itself goes back to Khoildar-sechen, Genghis Khan's nearest companion-in-arms, kinsman and sworn brother (*anda*) who was considered to be a forefather of the legendary Manguts and Uruts, shock troops of his army. As for the name of the Mangut tribe (Chinese "*mengu*") that appeared in Chinese sources of the VIII century, describing the events of the VI-VII centuries, it must have been an ethnonymic base for the "Mongol" name.

There are interesting pieces of information of the Tang epoch about the Bokhan toponym and the tribes dwelling here in V-VI centuries. This makes it possible to specify the ethymology of some toponyms and ethnonyms of the Buryats of the Angara River territory. Thus, in the works, focused on studying the Buryats, "Bokhan" is interpreted as "the head of shamen", "the khan of shamen" (from "*Boo-khan*" or "*bookhen*"). However, "Boma possession" is met in Chinese sources. It is derived from "*boma*", "*boom*" which mean 'a gorge', a high cliff blocking up a passage or a narrow valley in the mountains, etc. The latter seems to be a more preferable

variant from the point of view of general Siberian toponymy (the Even '*bom*' means 'a gorge', there is a low mountain '*Boma*' on the way from Kyzyl to Shagonar). I was first told about "Boma possession" in Chinese chronicles of the VI century by G.B. Dagdanov, a famous Sinologist, born in that place (Kutanka village). As I found out later, "Boma" is translated as "Marked Horse" that corresponds to the horses' colour rather popular for the Osinsko-Bokhansk Buryats in ancient times (cf. the ethnonym *alagui*, meaning 'a horseman, riding marked horses'). The "Boma possession" name is connected with the Gunno-Bulgarian tribe of the Basmils ("*bas*"//"*bash*" ("a head") + "*milige*", "*bilige*", "*bulagat*"). In such a case the ethnonym "*bulagat*" should be associated not with "*bulagan*" (sable) but with the Turkic and Uigur "*bulan*" (elk), that is more logical from linguistic and totemic points of view, as well as with the Scythian and Aryan tribal name of "*sak*" (deer, maral, elk) from which the ethnonyms "*sagai*" (the Khakass language), "*sakha*" (the Yakut language), "*saaia*", "*sak'ia*", etc. were derived.

Rashid ad-Din in his collected chronicles gives very interesting information about the peoples dwelling on the Angara River territory. He reckons how Tolui's wife, whose name is Sorgoktani according to Persian and Arab sources that is considered to be wrong as the right name is Sakhatan, meaning "a beautiful Yakut girl", sent a special expedition under the command of "three emirs" to the Angara basin. This episode from Sakhatan's biography is described in the "Tartar tribe" part in which Rashid mentions: "when the tribes of the Tartars, the Durbans (the four Oirat tribes, probably), the Saldzhiuts (cf. Tuvinian *salchaki* and *sel'dzhuli*) and the Katakans united, they all dwelt in the rivers' lower reaches".

Further on Rashid clarifies that the Angara's left-bank tributaries are meant here. The best-known tributary among them is the Irkut river at



which the Irgits (the Uriankhai tribe mentioned by Herodotus under the name of “the Irkis”) dwelt: “At the place of these rivers’ junction the river Ankara-muren is formed. This river is extremely large: more than one Mongolian tribe, usutu-mankhun, dwells here. At present the border of the tribe’s settlement adjoins (the place’s name is omitted). That river (the Angara) is near to Kikasi city at the point where this river and the river Kem flow together. That city belongs to the Kirghiz people’s area. They state that this river (the Angara) flows into one area near which there is a sea. Silver is everywhere there. The area’s names are Alafkhim, Adutan, Mankhu and Balaurnan. They say that their (those peoples’) horses were all skewbald (ala); every horse was as strong as a four-year-old camel (alagui); all the tools and dishes (of the population) are made from silver. There are many birds in that country. Sorkutani-begi sent a ship with three emirs and a thousand of people. They brought much silver ashore (from the depth of the country) but failed to put it on board a ship. More than 300 persons from that army didn’t come back. The rest died of the rottenness of the air and damp evaporation. All three emirs came back safely and lived long after” (“Collected chronicles”, p. 102).

According to Rashid ad-Din, “Mangud” tribe<sup>2</sup>, descendants of a great grandfather Temuchin of the eighth generation of Mann Todon, came from Nachin Baatur, his seventh son, Mankhu by name. Mankhu’s grandson of the seventh generation was Khoildar-Sechen. The record of this episode about Sakhatan’s expedition of “Usutu-Mangun Mongolian tribe” was especially interesting for me. The same three Manguts are spoken about but the matter is that our Mangut tribe has always been living in the valley of the Osa river, another left-bank tributary of the Angara. Thus, they are “usutu Manguts” (as Osa is “us” that means “water”). My great grandfather Makhut was born not far from Osa

village located at the river Osa’s bank. This place has become the centre of Osinsky aimak of Ust-Ordynsk national okrug (area/district) of Irkutsk oblast (region).

Thus, this episode from Sakhatan’s biography helps to clarify quite a disputable matter of “su-mongoloas” (“water Mongols”) who should be referred to the Tungus Manchurians dwelling at the river “Mangu” (or Argun’). The Chinese reckoned them among “Dunkhu” group (eastern barbarians). In fact, this term means “a Tungus” that corresponds to the Buryat “Tunka” that is “Tunka aimak” located in the Eastern Sayan. It adjoins the Okinsky aimak where the todzhinsk tribe Ak used to dwell (now it is the place where “soiots” (that is “soyans”) live) and the Zakamensky aimak where the Buryat khamnigans, that is the Tungus people live. One more clan of the Tungus origin is Dongakis, the Turkic-speaking Tuvinian people. Their name is clearly connected with the ethnographic concept “Dunkhu”. This clan was a part of the Kereits’ tribal union. After their defeat it was scattered among other “indigenous” Mongols. This is how the Dunkhus, whose main population was constituted by the tribes of Tungus Manchurian origin, defeated by Bator-Tenrikut (the Mongolian Modun’), the first Khunnus’ emperor, the ruler of the first Tengrian empire, were assimilated by Genghis Khan’s Mongols who actually continued the policy of the first Tenrikut, that is the Heavenly Son’s emperor what Genghis Khan really became.

As for “skewbald horses” mentioned in connection with “Boma possession”, it should be added here that it was this colour of the horses that was widely spread among the horses of the Tokuz-Oguzes, the ancestors of the northern Tele-Uigurs, their kinsmen Baiyrkhuu (Barguts) as well as the Khondogors and the Kurykans, the Sakha-Uriankhais’ and the Tannu-Uriankhais’ ancestors. Thus, in Tang chronicles they

mentioned that “the baiirky horses were similar to kurykan horses as the most part of grey coloured horses had black spots like the leopards’ ones” (Maliavkin, 1989, p. 139).

Thus, the stated above has made it possible to conclude that the so-called “western Buryats” dwelling on Lake Baikal and Gornaya Buryatia (Tunkinsky, Okinsky, Zakamensky aimaks) territories are successors of all previous Turkic khaganates, the United Uigur khaganate (VIII century), and the northern Khunnus. At the

same time they are successors of the Mongol Empire (Khanag Mongol Uls). The north-western Buryats’ spiritual and cultural as well as ethno-confessional traditions have been keeping the religious beliefs and cults of not only Siberian Scythian Aryans (Aryan religion) (the adoration of Khomust-Tengri, in particular) but also the religious traditions of “White Faith” characteristic to the Turkic-speaking peoples of Sayano-Altai, especially the Tele-Uigurs, the Uriankhais and the Tumats.

<sup>1</sup> I am very much thankful to academician L. Dashniam for the manuscript of this article about Bodonchar. It helped me to clarify many unclear things in “The Secret History of the Mongols” and other Mongolian texts.

<sup>2</sup> T.D. Skrynnikova mentions the tribal name Mankhud among the manes of the heads of the clans in connection with Genghis Khan’s genealogy (cf. “Nukers are elite of Genghis Khan’s Mongolian ulus” in: *Genghis Khan i sud’by narodov Evrazii* [Genghis Khan and Eurasia peoples’ fates – 2]. Ulan-Ude, 2007. P. 32).

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# **Геополитические и этнокультурные аспекты региональной безопасности российского приграничья в условиях социокультурного транзита евразийской цивилизации**

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*В статье рассматриваются геополитические и этнокультурные аспекты региональной безопасности российского приграничья в условиях социокультурного транзита евразийской цивилизации, а также проблемы влияния идеологии «тэнгризма» на процессы политогенеза тюрко-монгольских народов и на становление форм государственности.*

*Ключевые слова: религия, идеология, тэнгрианская религия, синергетика, процесс социальной самоорганизации, самоорганизация, государственность, Империя Хунну, Хамаг Монгол Улс.*

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